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# THE GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

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## PRESENTATION OF THE DAVID LIVINGSTONE CENTENARY MEDAL TO COLONEL THEODORE ROOSEVELT

At the regular monthly meeting of the American Geographical Society on March 20 in the Engineering Societies' Building, 29 West Thirty-ninth Street, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt was presented with the David Livingstone Centenary Medal. This gold medal was founded in 1913 by the Hispanic Society of America. It is awarded by the American Geographical Society of New York and since its foundation has been presented to but one other explorer, Sir Douglas Mawson.

President Greenough presided and on presenting the medal made the following remarks:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellows of the Society:

"The occasion on which we meet tonight is one of great interest and is made all the more notable by the presence of His Excellency the Brazilian Ambassador and other distinguished guests who have honored us by their attendance and whom I welcome in your name.

"A well-known feature of the form of government in the United States provides that the incumbent of any office—no matter how exalted—when his public employment has ceased, shall resume his station as a plain citizen of the Republic, without insignia or any artificial endowment to distinguish him from his fellows. Therefore I, as your representative, am permitted on this occasion to forget for a moment the great part which our guest has played in the history of our nation and to address him solely as a co-worker in the field of science to which our Society is dedicated. That he should have found time throughout many years of engrossing cares of international importance to pursue earnestly the geographical labors with which his name is associated is evidence of his devotion to the cause; and his accomplishment as explorer, writer, and speaker bears

witness to the breadth and solidity of his geographical knowledge. The Society seeks by the bestowal of its enduring memorial to record its lively appreciation of the important service which he has rendered. His journeys have covered both South America and Africa, so that there seems an especial fitness in the title of the medal awarded to him. It is designated the David Livingstone Centenary Medal and was founded by the Hispanic Society of America on the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of that great pioneer and explorer, in accordance with the legend inscribed upon it. This reads in part:

TO BE AWARDED BY  
THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY  
OF NEW YORK  
FOR SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT IN THE FIELD OF  
GEOGRAPHY  
IN THE  
SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

“The Council of the Society feel that the award which they are now making to our guest of the evening complies eminently with the terms of the foundation. His explorations in South America and Africa and his illuminating interpretations of the life of the pioneer upon many of the world’s great frontiers sufficiently establish his reputation as a geographer, and his unequaled influence with the youth of the country has won the attention of thousands amongst them to the inviting field of exploration and geographical research.

“And now, Colonel Roosevelt, in behalf of the Council and Fellows of the American Geographical Society, I hand you this gold medal in token of their recognition of your distinguished contributions to geographical science; and in so doing I may be allowed to express the pleasure felt by the Society in the association of its name with your own in this memorial. Finally I desire to convey to you an expression of personal regard and admiration from our many members and their hope that you may be long spared to inspire by your example and teaching a fervent and undivided Americanism throughout our land.”

Colonel Roosevelt replied in part as follows:

“I very deeply appreciate the signal honor conferred on me by the American Geographical Society. There is no other recognition that could be given me by any scientific or literary body which I should value as much as I do the medal you have awarded me. I thank you with all my heart. You have made me very proud.

“Having said this; having, I trust, shown you how deeply I value and appreciate your action, I am sure that you will pardon me for saying that if I had been consulted before you made the award, I should have asked you as a matter of justice to confer this medal on Col. Candido Rondon

of Brazil. During the last ten years, aside from polar exploration, the most important, most difficult, and most hazardous work in exploration and field geography, the work most fruitful in results alike from the standpoint of the scientific geographer and of the explorer, has been that done by Colonel Rondon at the head of the Brazilian Telegraphic Commission. The expedition which I had the honor to command—Colonel Rondon being associated with me—during the early months of 1914 was rendered possible only by the hard and perilous work done by Colonel Rondon and his associates of the Brazilian Telegraphic Commission during the preceding seven years in the then unexplored wilderness of Matto Grosso. We merely put the cap on the pyramid which had thus been erected. I wish also to express my heartiest appreciation of the generosity of the Brazilian Government. The expedition was rendered possible only by the more than open-handed support given it by the Government of Brazil.

“At the opening of the present decade, the second decade of the twentieth century, hardly any other region in the world of like extent was so nearly a blank, from the standpoint of the cartographer, as that portion of the western basin of the Amazon which stretches from the highland divide of central Brazil north to the mighty river itself. For two or three centuries the men who went up and down the Amazon and its main affluent, the Madeira, had known and named the mouths of the chief rivers running into them. But nothing whatever was known of the source, length, and course of certain of these rivers; just as the lower Nile was known for several thousand years before its upper course was explored and put on the map by Speke, Grant, and Baker. The Brazilian Telegraphic Commission, in working westward along the great Matto Grosso divide or watershed, had come across several streams running northward into the unknown wilderness over which the equatorial forest lay like a vast green shroud. I decided to explore the largest of these, so as to see whether there was not some affluent of the lower Madeira, or of the Amazon near the mouth of the Madeira, of a size and importance hitherto undreamed of and not even hinted at on any existing map.

“From the headwaters of the Paraguay we crossed, and went along, the highland divide, traveling on mule back for nearly six weeks. On our way we passed the headwaters of a stream nicknamed the Pineapple, flowing northward into the unknown; this stream was second in size to the one I planned to go down.

“The exploration proper occupied two months. As a result we put on the map a river about the size of the Elbe or the Rhine, of the very existence of which the maps had previously given no hint. By turning to the maps issued before our expedition you will see that various wholly imaginary rivers were put down as running almost at right angles across the course actually followed by the river which we descended. This unknown river, which we thus explored, rises between the 59th and 60th degrees of longi-

tude west from Greenwich, and between the 12th and 13th degrees of latitude south, and flows northward between the 60th and 61st degrees of longitude west, emptying into the Madeira—of which it is the most important affluent—between the 5th and 6th degrees of latitude south. I counted it extraordinary good fortune at this late day in the exploration of the world to take part in such a piece of work. The innumerable rapids in the river, the scarcity of food animals and plants in the forests, the fact that the country was not healthy, and the neighborhood of wild and treacherous Indians added elements of danger to the toil. Three of our party lost their lives.

“In latitude  $10^{\circ}58'$  we passed the mouth of a big tributary river which entered from the right, and which we christened the Cardozo. We of course knew nothing as to whence this river came, and so could not put it on the map, except only the mouth. But the following year Lieutenant de Souza of the Telegraphic Commission, at the head of a party, descended the Pineapple River; and it proved to be the Cardozo. The Indians attacked this expedition and killed de Souza and all but three of his men; one of the latter returned to camp when the Indians had left and got de Souza's diary, which he actually brought in, after being some twenty-three days alone in the wilderness before he reached the first rubberman's camp.

“Your President has been kind enough to refer to me as having shown during my life that I was emphatically an American. I am deeply grateful. At this time there is no lesson so important to this country as Americanism; Americanism of that virile type which disclaims all divided national allegiance and which insists upon those primary virtues that are wholly incompatible with the ignoble folly of the professional pacifist. This medal is named after David Livingstone, the great missionary explorer. His work finally cost him his life; as their work has cost the lives of many other explorers, from Mungo Park to Scott. Livingstone was as just and gentle and lovingly tender a man as ever lived; but he was lionhearted, alike in his readiness to risk life for a sufficient object and in the flaming indignation with which he made ready to oppose with force of arms the wrongdoer and the oppressor. He was wholly incapable of the peculiarly offensive hypocrisy which stands idly by and utters pious platitudes of sentimentality, while triumphant brutality tramples on the unoffending. You of this organization set a high value on that work of the explorer which is predicated on willingness to face hazard and jeopardy, and on the sense of proportion which refuses to put an overweight on life when balanced against worthy achievement. The work to which you give the most generous recognition is work which is almost as dangerous as war; work in which the service rendered is rendered at the cost of a mortality almost as great as in war. This attitude of American geographers towards the subject which is their peculiar interest is the attitude which it behooves the whole American nation to take as regards the prime duties of national

defense and international honor. We must put service first—not safety first; and we must act with that lofty and noble idealism which expends itself, not in empty words, but in action which recognizes the elemental fact that those men only are fit to live who are not afraid to die.’’

The exercises closed with a brief informal address by His Excellency Domicio da Gama, the Ambassador from Brazil, who was received by the Fellows of the Society with much enthusiasm. Senhor da Gama expressed great satisfaction in Colonel Roosevelt’s high praise of Colonel Rondon’s work and announced his intention of cabling a message to that effect to his government. After reference to Brazil’s resources and its prospects for development he spoke feelingly of the cordial relations between the government of Brazil and that of the United States and particularly emphasized the fact that Brazil welcomes the scientific explorer, to whom governmental facilities will always be offered.